

into the ship. After looking some time at the Russians, they returned to the island.

Beerings and his officers resolved to venture to land, and for this purpose the great shallop was hoisted overboard. Lieutenant Waxel, accompanied by Steller and nine men well armed, went into the boat, and proceeded towards the island. They found the shore lined with a range of sharp rocks, and the fear of being dashed against them by the impetuosity of the wind, prevented the Russians from approaching nearer than within three fathoms of the land. The Americans to the number of nine, appeared on the shore, and were invited by signs to come to the shallop. But, as they could neither be tempted by the signs that were made, nor the presents which were offered them, and still continued to invite the Russians to land, Waxel put on shore three men, among whom was a Tschutski or Koriak interpreter. They moored the shallop to one of the rocks, as they had been ordered.

These men were kindly received by the savages, but being unable to understand each other, they were obliged to converse by signs. The Americans, with a view to regale the Russians, presented them with whale's flesh, which was the only provision they had with them. It appeared that their residence here was only for the purpose of catching whales, for on the shore were observed as many boats as men, but no hut, and not a woman among them; so that, probably, they had no permanent habitation but on the continent. They had neither arrows nor any other arms that could give umbrage to the Russians, and at length, one of them had the courage to go into the boat to Waxel. He appeared to be the oldest person, and the chief of the party. Waxel presented him with a glass of brandy, but that liquor appeared equally disagreeable and strange to him. After spitting it out of his mouth, he began to cry out, as if complaining to his countrymen that the Russians were using him ill. It was found impossible to appease him; needles, glass beads, an iron pot, pipes, were offered him, but he refused them all. He immediately returned to the island, and Waxel did not judge it prudent to detain him any longer. At the same time, he called off the three men who had been put on shore.

The Americans at first shewed a disposition to detain them all. At length, they suffered two of the Russians to return, but kept the interpreter. Some of them even seized the cable by which the shallop was moored, thinking no doubt she was as